

IN THE SPECIFICATION

1. Please insert the new section heading and paragraphs below immediately before the *Brief Description of the Drawings* section that begins on page 5:

Summary of the Invention

In a communication system that includes a first base transceiver station (BTS) providing communication coverage of a first area and a second BTS providing communication coverage of a second area, a method is provided for removing the first BTS from the communication system while maintaining communication coverage of both first and second areas. A first signal is transmitted from a first BTS having a first signal strength. A second signal is transmitted from a second BTS having a second signal strength, the first signal strength of the first signal in the first area being greater than the second signal strength of the second signal in the first area. A command to remove the first BTS from the communication system is received, and the first signal strength of the first signal is reduced until the second signal strength of the second signal in the first area is greater than the first signal strength of the first signal in the first area to cause a subscriber unit communicatively coupled to the first BTS to remove communicative coupling with the first BTS and establish communicative coupling with the second BTS.

In a communication system that includes a first BTS providing communication coverage of a first area and a second BTS providing communication coverage of a second area, an apparatus is provided for removing the first BTS from the communication system while maintaining communication coverage of both first and second areas. The apparatus includes a first BTS adapted to transmit a first signal having a first signal strength, a second BTS adapted to transmit a second signal having a second signal strength (the first signal strength of the first signal in the first area being greater than the second signal strength of the second signal in the first area), and a controller responsive to a command to remove the first BTS from the communication system and which issues a command to the first BTS to reduce the first signal strength of the first signal until the second signal strength of the second signal in the first area is greater than the first signal strength of the first signal in the first area to cause a subscriber unit communicatively coupled to a first BTS to remove communicative coupling with the first BTS and establish communicative coupling with the second BTS.

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